

AN  
HISTORICAL  
GEOGRAPHY OF  
IRAN

---

W. BARTHOLD

TRANSLATED BY  
SVAT SOUCEK

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
C. E. BOSWORTH

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

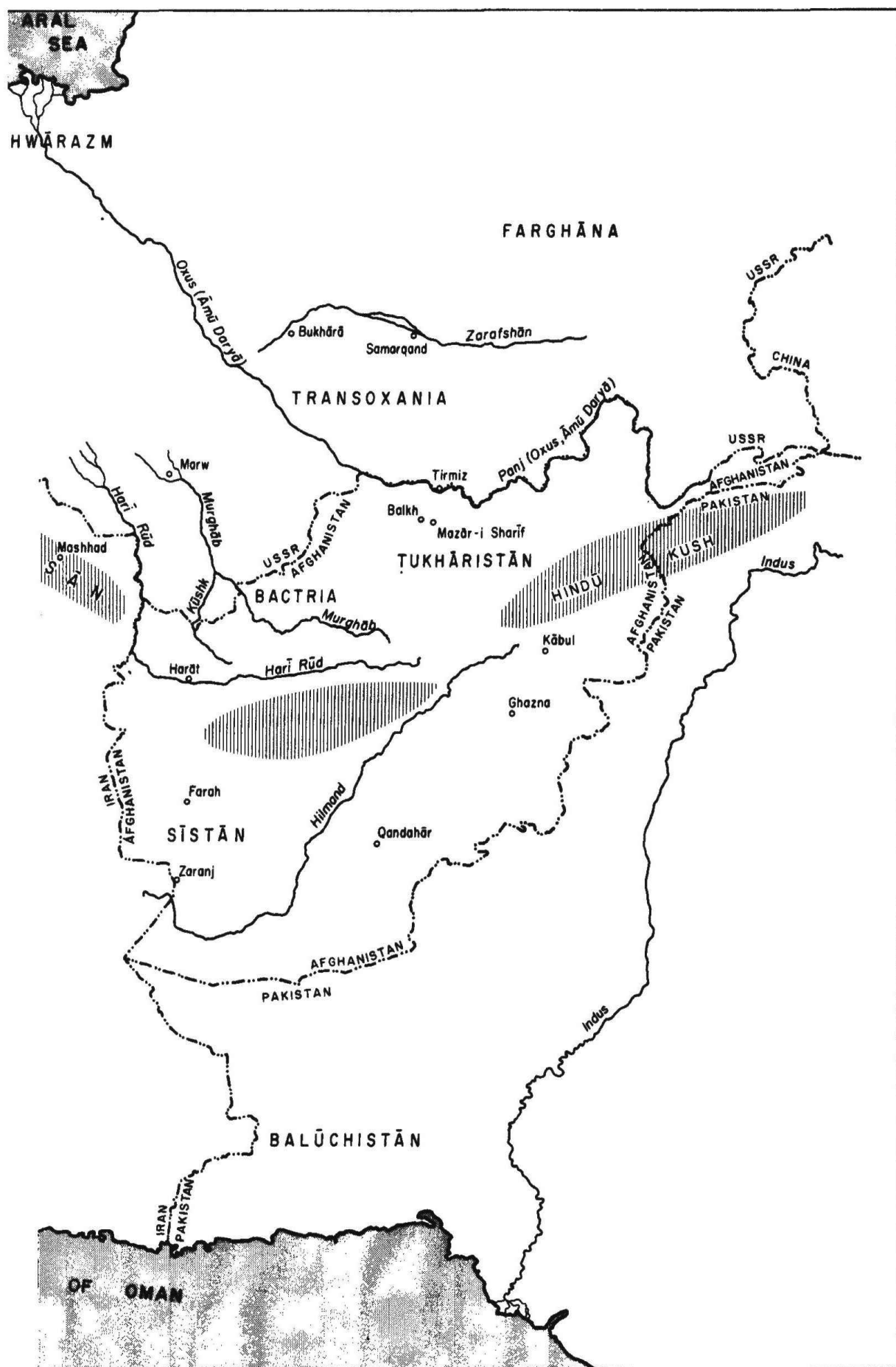
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AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
AGWG	<i>Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
AI	<i>Athār-e Irān</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AMI	<i>Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran</i>
AN	<i>Akademiia Nauk</i>
ANVA	<i>Avhandlingar utgivet av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi, Oslo</i>
AO	<i>Acta Orientalia</i>
AOHung	<i>Acta Orientalia Hungarica</i>
AOr	<i>Archív Orientální</i>
APAW	<i>Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
BGA	<i>Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum</i>
BSO[A]S	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental [and African] Studies</i>
CAJ	<i>Central Asiatic Journal</i>
EI <sup>1</sup>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st edition</i>
EI <sup>2</sup>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edition</i>
EW	<i>East and West</i>
Farhang	<i>Farhang-i jughrāfiyā-yi Irān</i>
GAL	<i>C. Brockelmann, Geschichte der arabischen Literatur</i>
GIPh	<i>W. Geiger and E. Kuhn, eds., Grundriss der iranischen Philologie</i>
GJ	<i>Geographical Journal</i>
GMS	<i>Gibb Memorial Series</i>
HJAS	<i>Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies</i>
HOr	<i>Handbuch der Orientalistik</i>
IA	<i>Islām Ansiklopedisi</i>
IJ	<i>Indo-Iranian Journal</i>
IJMES	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
IQ	<i>Islamic Quarterly</i>
Iran, JBIPS	<i>Iran, Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies</i>
Isl.	<i>Der Islam</i>
IUTAKÈ	<i>Trudy Iuzhno-Turkmenistanskoi arkheologicheskoi kompleksnoi èkspeditsii</i>

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>JA</i>	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
<i>JASB</i>	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JESHO</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>JRCAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</i>
<i>JSFOu</i>	<i>Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>MO</i>	<i>Le Monde Oriental</i>
<i>NGWG</i>	<i>Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>Norsk Tidsskrift for Sprogvidenskap</i>
<i>OLZ</i>	<i>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>OON</i>	<i>Otdelenie obshchestvennykh nauk</i>
<i>PRGS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society</i>
<i>PW</i>	<i>Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>REI</i>	<i>Revue des Études Islamiques</i>
<i>RMM</i>	<i>Revue du Monde Musulman</i>
<i>SA</i>	<i>Sovetskaia Arkheologiia</i>
<i>SBAW Berlin</i>	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Königlich. Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
<i>SBWAW</i>	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
<i>SB Bayr. AW</i>	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
<i>Soch.</i>	<i>V. V. Bartol'd, Sochineniia, Moscow, 1963-1977. 9 vols.</i>
<i>SON</i>	<i>Seriia obshchestvennykh nauk</i>
<i>Survey of Persian Art</i>	<i>A. U. Pope and P. A. Ackermann, eds. A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present. 6 vols. London and New York, 1938-1939.</i>
<i>TPS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Philological Society</i>
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
<i>ZDMG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
<i>ZII</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik, Leipzig</i>
<i>ZVORAO</i>	<i>Zapiski Vostochnogo Otdeleniia Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva</i>









## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

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No historian of the eastern Islamic world is unfamiliar with the works of Vasilii Vladimirovich Bartol'd (1869-1930), or Wilhelm Barthold, as his name was originally rendered in the Germano-Russian milieu into which he was born. His magnum opus, the work based on his St. Petersburg doctoral thesis, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*, appeared in English in the Gibb Memorial Series in 1928, and with an extra, hitherto unpublished chapter, again in 1968. The late Professor V. and Mrs. T. Minorsky performed a valuable service in 1958-1962 by translating as *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia* (in fact, five studies) Barthold's *A Short History of Turkestan*, *History of the Semirech'yé*, *Ulugh-Beg*, *Mir 'Alī Shīr*, and *A History of the Turkman People*. The lectures that Barthold gave in Turkish at Istanbul in 1926 are available in both German and French versions (*Zwölf Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Türken Mittelasiens*, 1935, and *Histoire des Turcs d'Asie Centrale*, 1945). A general work on Asian exploration and the evolution of oriental studies appeared in French in 1947, *La découverte de l'Asie, histoire de l'orientalisme en Europe et en Russie*. Various other lesser works have been translated into western languages and into Arabic, Persian, and Turkish; Barthold wrote certain of his articles in the language of his family background, German; and the large number of articles that he wrote for the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (many of them now updated and included in the new edition) are also widely available to the non-Russophone reader. But although the work of translation has gone on steadily in the half-century since Barthold's death, these works still represent only a small part of his total oeuvre, extending over some forty years; the *Collected Works (Sochineniia)* that appeared at Moscow between 1963 and 1977 (comprising ten parts in nine volumes) amount to over 7,000 large pages.

The stature of the man emerges from these bare statistics and the recounting of titles. The lands of eastern Islam, from Iran to Afghanistan and Central Asia, were Barthold's particular sphere of interest, and above all the latter, for the Russian advance into Central Asia during the later nineteenth century opened up for Russian scholars exciting possibilities of historical and archaeolog-

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ical investigation, whereas earlier European travelers to places like Khiva, Bukhara, and Samarqand had had to contend with capricious and barbaric local potentates who hardly observed the international conventions of behavior toward accredited diplomats, let alone toward free-lance travelers and researchers, figures of suspicion at the best of times. Barthold realized early in his scholarly career at the University of St. Petersburg, where he lectured from 1896 onward, that the investigation of the history, topography, and antiquities of Central Asia offered a field similar to that opened up in the Indian subcontinent in the late eighteenth century for British scholars. Barthold made almost annual field trips to Central Asia starting in 1893, undeterred by the fact that in that first year, on a journey to Semirechye, he broke his leg and had to return to Tashkent for medical treatment. In the 1920s, he was much in demand by the various Soviet republics that had by 1924 emerged in Central Asia after the final extinguishing of nationalist and separatist aspirations there, to write local histories and accounts of the different Turkish peoples of the republics. Both in the Tsarist period and after, Barthold was insistent that Russian officials, traders, soldiers, and so on working in Central Asia should busy themselves in their spare time with the study of the region, recognizing how much invaluable work had been done for our knowledge of Indian geography, society, and history by successive generations of devoted British administrators and soldiers.

Central Asia has always been at the receiving end of religious, cultural, and other influences, rather than being a spontaneously creative region, and it is this receptiveness to an assortment of outside civilizations—including those of China, India, the Middle East—that makes the study of Central Asia and the interaction of these strands such a fascinating one. It does, however, make stringent demands on the scholar who would devote himself to Inner Asia, not least in the matter of linguistic equipment; hence the rarity of the multilingual Marquarts and Pelliot. Barthold's concern was more particularly Islamic Central Asia, and his skills lay chiefly in the sphere of the three great Islamic languages, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. He was an exacting philologist, fully cognizant of the truism not always appreciated today that without philological expertise the would-be specialist in the Middle East, or for that matter, in any part of Asia, is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Accompanying his *Turkestan* when it appeared in 1898-1900 was a volume of texts, most of them edited for the first time by Barthold from manuscripts bristling with linguistic problems

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and difficulties of interpretation; many of these texts, such as Gardīzī's *Zayn al-akhbār*, 'Awfi's *Jawāmi' al-ḥikāyāt*, and Isfizarī's *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, have since been published, but here, as in so many spheres, Barthold was the pioneer.

One of those great civilizations that have profoundly affected Central Asia is the Iranian, for out of Iran such faiths as Zoroastrianism, Manicheism, Nestorian Christianity, and most recently Islam have been mediated to the Asian heartland. If only because a knowledge of Iranian civilization was a necessary adjunct to the understanding of Central Asia, Barthold was bound to be attracted to the study of Iran, a land with which Russia had already long been in intimate political, military, and commercial contact. Two of his major works, indeed, deal with it, the one translated here, and *Iran, a Historical Survey*, and both will now be available in English (a translation of the latter appeared at Bombay in about 1939).

Barthold's basic attitude to history was, as Professor Yuri Bregel has pointed out in a perceptive study that should be read in conjunction with this present Introduction,<sup>1</sup> that of nineteenth-century German positivist historiography, with the evolution of mankind viewed as a convergence of originally distinct human societies through the diffusion of culturally more advanced societies to the less advanced. It was in the light of this process that he viewed such diverse phenomena as religion, the growth of world empires, the development of urban life, and the spread of international trade, and that he viewed with favor the *missions civilisatrices* of the imperial powers of his time, whether Britain in India and Africa or Russia in Central Asia, Siberia, and the Caucasus. It was, indeed, Barthold's intellectual support for the Imperial Russian mission in Central Asia (one whose positive achievements were appreciated at the time by outside observers such as Schuyler and Curzon) that eventually contributed to a fuller rehabilitation of his work in post-Stalinist Soviet Russia. For although Barthold, as a Russian patriot, had stayed on in Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution, he gave no assent to Communism and regarded Marx as an unhistorical, unscientific figure whose ideas had no relevance for oriental studies; he had never become a nonperson in Soviet scholarship, but his works had been somewhat neglected or cited only selectively and misleadingly in some quarters, above all in the Central Asian Soviet Republics.

*The Historical Geography of Iran* is essentially an analytical and

<sup>1</sup> "Barthold and Modern Oriental Studies," *IJMES*, XII (1980), 385-403.

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descriptive work rather than an attempt at synthesis. Barthold was conscious of the backwardness of oriental studies in the identification and evaluation of the basic sources, compared with long-established disciplines such as classical studies and European literature and history. He held that the critical study of these basic sources was necessary before any meaningful grand syntheses could be made. Iran, with its successive great empires—those of the Achaemenids, Parthians, Sāsānids, and Muslims—its diverse faiths and its fine literary and artistic achievements, was already much more sharply focussed for the scholar than was Central Asia, but the historical geography of Iran, apart from groundwork done by such scholars as Tomaschek, had been hardly explored. As it happened, while Barthold was working on his book, two German scholars were also putting together outstanding contributions to this very subject, though from very different angles. Josef Marquart (a scholar whom Barthold felt to be to some extent a rival to himself, with their overlapping interests, and one whose wide-ranging speculations, even at times lucubrations, Barthold felt were often not sufficiently firmly grounded in reality) in his *Ērānšahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses Xorenac'i* (1901) gave a translation of a brief and jejune Armenian geographical work enriched by a commentary of amazing erudition; and Paul Schwarz was embarking on his *Iran in Mittelalter* (1896-1936), a patient synthesis of all the information available in the medieval Islamic geographers but without any attempt at interpretation. These works Barthold was able to draw upon substantially only for his additional notes, but his own book stands as a parallel, though completely independent achievement, and has the additional advantage of providing a successful blend of classical, medieval Islamic, and modern European information on his subject.

For sources, Barthold accordingly drew upon the results of a patient sifting by earlier Iranists of the classical—above all Greek—sources on Iran; and then, for the earlier Islamic centuries, upon the corpus of ninth- and tenth-century Arabic geographical texts collected by M. J. de Goeje in his *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* (1870-1894), supplemented by Yāqūt's *Mu'jam al-buldān*. For the period of the Saljuqs, Mongols, Tīmūrids, and so on, he had texts by authors such as Nasawī, Juwaynī, 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī, and Hāfiz-i Abrū, in the exploitation of which Barthold was often a trailblazer. For the period up to the present, for which primary historical sources in Persian or Arabic become sparser, he utilized fully the many European travelers, diplomatic envoys, merchants,

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members of religious orders, and so on who traveled within Iran, being thereby able, through the citation of such recent observers as I. N. Berezin, E. G. Browne, the Hon. G. N. Curzon, and A. V. Williams Jackson, to make his survey entirely up to date. It is not surprising that Barthold is particularly full on Khurāsān and the northeastern fringes of Iran, for Russian travelers and scholars had done much valuable spadework here for him; but the breadth of his treatment of other provinces such as Fārs and Azerbaijan shows that his mastery of the source material extended to the whole of historic Iran, including Mesopotamia, that at various epochs has formed part of the empires of Iran.

The basic sources for the medieval Islamic period have not been greatly enlarged since Barthold's time. Since it was only in 1922 that A.Z.V. Togan discovered at Mashhad a manuscript of the Arab traveler Abū Dulaf al-Khazraji's second *risāla* on his travels in northern and western Iran, Barthold was not able to draw upon this, although he was of course aware of the numerous citations from this work in Yāqūt; I have therefore added the relevant references to Minorsky's 1955 edition and translation of the *risāla*. Also, Barthold naturally knew of the anonymous Persian geographical work from the late tenth century, the *Hudūd al-'ālam*, acquired by Captain A. G. Tumanskii at Bukhara in 1893, and whose text he was later to edit and to have published posthumously (1930). But in the earlier period, he was only able to quote to a limited extent from a photographic copy, so that ampler references to the English translation and monumental commentary of Minorsky (1937) have been added by Livshits.

Finally, one should mention that a Persian translation of the *Historical Geography of Iran* was published at Tehran in 1930 by Sardādwar; it is now very hard to find,<sup>2</sup> and it may be fairly claimed that the present translation will for the first time make available to western readers one of the masterworks of a giant of oriental studies.

THE translation has been made by Dr. Svat Soucek from the text of the *Istoriko-geograficheskii obzor Irana* given in Vol. VII of Barthold's *Sochineniia* (Moscow, 1971), pp. 31-225, a volume provided with a lengthy Introduction (pp. 5-28) by Dr. V. A. Livshits. Barthold's original text is liberally sprinkled with quotations from Ar-

<sup>2</sup> My colleague, Mr. Mohsen Ashtiany, tells me that it has, however, recently been reprinted in Iran.

## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

abic, Persian, and Turkish sources given in the original Arabic script. These also have been translated; citations from classical Greek authors have been left in the original script.

The notes are an exceedingly valuable feature of this 1971 edition, but as translated in this present work they represent a palimpsest, as it were, of different layers by different hands. Barthold's original notes, given with the 1903 original text, were brief and largely confined to the citation of oriental texts used for the work. But as was his custom with other major works, over the years Barthold accumulated, out of his own reading and in some instances his closer personal acquaintance with the actual terrain, a rich collection of further references. Facsimile examples of Barthold's notes are given by Livshits at pp. 22-26 of his Introduction. Livshits has integrated these with the notes of the original edition (leaving them, in many cases, in their terse, elliptical, notelike form), and in the present translation, these are not otherwise distinguished; anyone who wishes to disentangle the 1903 notes from the subsequent ones can easily do so from the *Sochineniia* text. Livshits has, however, vastly increased the value of the latter text by adding his own extensive annotation, comprising in the main relevant works that appeared during the years 1930-1967. In the present translation, these are marked off by angle brackets, thus: «. . .»). The final layer is that of my own notes, references to works that have either appeared since 1967 or that were published earlier but were apparently not available to Livshits in the Soviet Union. Furthermore, references to translations of texts into western European languages, for example to Yule's translation of Marco Polo and to Le Strange's one of Clavijo's *Embassy to Tamerlane*, have been given where Barthold cited only Russian translations. These additions of my own have been placed within square brackets, thus: [. . .] when they represent insertions within or additions to existing notes. Where a few notes have been inserted at fresh points in Barthold's text, these are indicated by letters, thus: a, b, c, etc. In general, however, I have sought not to overload still further an already substantial weight of annotation.

The bibliography given at the end of this book is a select one. Volume VII of the *Sochineniia* contains a bibliography of truly gargantuan dimensions (87 pages), although this also refers, it is true, to the other contents of the volume (*Iran, a Historical Survey*, some review articles and shorter articles, and some *Encyclopaedia of Islam* articles). The system that I have adopted within the body of the translation is to give the full title and bibliographical details when

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the work in question does not appear in the bibliography. The naturally very numerous Russian works cited by Barthold are usually given by short title only and without full bibliographical details. Sergei Shuiskii has assembled a bibliography of Russian works that gives the full references; this follows the main bibliography.

For measurements and distances, Barthold wisely did not attempt to reduce the figures given in his sources to a common denominator; hence one finds metric measurements side-by-side with, for example, English miles and the traditional Russian units. The reader may therefore find it useful to note that a verst is approximately a kilometer or 3,500 English feet in length, an arshin 28 inches in length, and a desiatina 2.7 acres in area.

C. E. BOSWORTH  
December 1981

AN  
HISTORICAL  
GEOGRAPHY OF  
IRAN



## INTRODUCTION

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THE purpose of this work is to present a brief survey of the geography of Iran, to dwell in greater detail on the sites that were at various historical periods the centers of life, and to determine, as far as possible, the degree of dependence of this life on geographical circumstances.

"Iran" as a geographical term denotes an elevated plateau, bordering on the north and northeast the basins of the Caspian and Aral seas, and on the west, south, and southeast, the basin of the Indian ocean. The country is one of the so-called interior, landlocked basins, whose characteristic peculiarities have been best described by F. Richthofen in his book on China.<sup>1</sup> The main difference between these basins and the ocean-drained or peripheral ones is that in the former, all the products of mechanical or chemical decomposition (through the action of water, wind, and so on) remain within the region, whereas in the latter they are carried away into the sea; in the former the accumulation of such deposits gradually effaces the unevenness of the soil and is instrumental in its leveling, whereas in the latter the deposits pile up along the coasts and further the formation of deltas and the raising of sea bottoms; the waters that pass through a country on the way to the sea erode the soil more and more, and the unevenness of the latter becomes ever more sharply pronounced. This is, then, how in closed basins the compartmentalization of the surface gradually diminishes, whereas in the peripheral ones it increases. Lack of moisture in landlocked basins, however, allows only a minor part of the country's surface to be cultivated, and this hinders a solid and lasting development of culture and civilization; for these reasons landlocked basins sharply differ from the peripheral ones not only in geography but also in history.

The Iranian plateau is one of such interior basins with an extremely dry climate.<sup>2</sup> Except in a few mountain areas, agriculture

<sup>1</sup> «F. Fr. von Richthofen, *China. Ergebnisse eigener Reisen und darauf gegründeter Studien* (Berlin, 1877), 1. Theil, 6-21.)»

<sup>2</sup> For the absence of change in the climate during the last millennium, cf. W. Tomaschek, "Zur historischen Topographie, II," pp. 561-62; Polybius, X, 28, 3 cited by L. S. Berg, "Ob izmeneniakh klimata v istoricheskuiu epokhu," *Zemlevedenie* (1911), book III, p. 80.

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is possible here only through irrigation; for this reason all the rivers, except for the most important ones, are divided up into irrigation canals as soon as they leave the mountains. Their remaining waters disappear in the sands. Civilization is of necessity concentrated along the fringes of the mountains that cut through the plateau. For these same reasons, the geographical borders of Iran could not coincide with the political and ethnic ones. The fact that almost the entire interior of the country is unsuitable for sedentary civilization could not but force the Iranians to settle areas neighboring the oceanic and Aralo-Caspian basins. The easternmost branch of the Iranians, the Afghans, now live chiefly in the basin of the Indus, whereas the westernmost one, the Kurds, live in that of the Tigris.<sup>3</sup> These were the approximate limits within which lived the historical Iranians,<sup>4</sup> as a result of which F. Spiegel, the author of a voluminous (now already somewhat dated) work on Iran, considered it possible to give his book the following title: *Érân, das Land zwischen dem Indus und Tigris*.

In the ethnic sense, the term "Iranians," as is well known, denotes that branch of the Aryans who are closely related to those of India. The oldest monuments of Indian and Iranian literatures are linguistically so similar that an attempt has even been made to reconstruct, in general terms, the language spoken by the proto-historical common ancestors of the Iranians and Indians. H. Oldenberg in his book *Aus Indien und Iran* remarks that "we can trace down to individual details the processes through which that language, not a single word of which has been preserved by history, developed to the southeast of the Hindu Kush into the dialect of the Vedas, and to the southwest of these same mountains into that of the Avesta."<sup>5</sup> Of the two branches of the Asian Aryans—the Indians and Iranians—the Indians received their ethnic characteristics, it would seem, only in the country on that side of the Hindu Kush: there are no traces of Indians inhabiting the area to the north of these mountains. On the other hand, the Iranians, in the opinion of today's scholars, had at one time occupied a considerable portion of southern Russia and all of Turkestan, both western, present-day Russian, Turkestan and eastern Turkestan, that is, the Tarim

<sup>3</sup> «For the present-day limits of the spread of the Iranian languages, see Oranskii, *Vvedenie*, p. 288.»

<sup>4</sup> In the *Kutāb al-Fihrist*, ed. G. Flügel, I, 18<sup>2</sup>, Sughd was called *Īrān al-A'lā*, "Upper Iran"; see Ross-Gauthiot, "De l'alphabet soghdien," *JA*, ser. 10, vol. XVII (1911), 532.

<sup>5</sup> «H. Oldenberg, *Aus Indien und Iran* (Berlin, 1899), pp. 137-38.»

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basin. The languages spoken in this entire area already had the characteristic features of the Iranian idiom, not those of the proto-historical Indo-Iranian tongue. Both this fact and the few historical data available to us—the latter partly set out in F. A. Braun's magisterial dissertation *Razyskaniia v oblasti goto-slavianskikh otnoshenii* ["Researches in the Field of Gotho-Slavic Relations"]<sup>6</sup>—make us suppose that the movement of the Iranians, after their separation from the Indians, proceeded from east to west rather than vice versa; the Iranians migrated into present-day Persia, most probably, also from the east,<sup>7</sup> and prior to their irruption there they reached a certain degree of cultural development in regions included today within the borders of Afghanistan. Here, in the basin of the Āmū Daryā and of other rivers that flow from the high mountain ranges that constitute that eastern limit of the Iranian plateau, the conditions of irrigation are somewhat more propitious than in the western part of Iran, for the high snow-clad mountain crests give rise to vigorous rivers. The traveler Ferrier, who in the years 1845-1846 crossed Persia and Afghanistan, states that through the area from Kermanshah, the principal town of Persian Kurdistan, to the Harī Rūd river, which represents the border of Persia and Afghanistan, he had to cross only brooks (*ruisseaux*); the Harī Rūd was the first river "à laquelle on puisse donner le nom de rivière."<sup>8</sup> According to Ferrier again, the Hilmand is the only water course in the entire area from the Tigris to the Indus that deserves the appellation of a full-fledged river (*fleuve*).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> F. A. Braun, *Razyskaniia v oblasti goto-slavianskikh otnoshenii. I. Goty i ikh sosedi do V veka. Pervyi period: Goty na Visle* (Saint Petersburg, 1899), pp. 77, 90, 96 (*Sbornik ORIAS = Otdelenie russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti Imp. Akademii nauk*, vol. XIV, no. 12).

<sup>7</sup> «For the possible routes of the movement of Iranian tribes into the territory of the Iranian plateau, see R. Ghirshman, *L'Iran des origines à l'Islam* (Paris, 1951), pp. 58 ff.; I. D'iakonov, *Istoriia Mīdu*, pp. 124-125, 1249-50; E. A. Grantovskii, "Drevneiranskoe etnicheskoe nazvanie "Parsava-Parsa," in *Kratkie soobshchennia Instituta narodov Azii AN SSSR*, fasc. XXX (1961), pp. 3-19; V. I. Abaev, *Shifo-evropeiskie izoglosy na styke Vostoka i Zapada* (Moscow, 1961), pp. 122-24; M. Mayrhofer, *Die Indo-Arier im alten Vorderasien (mit einer analytischen Bibliographie)* (Wiesbaden, 1966); V. M. Masson, *Srednuaia Azia i Drevnii Vostok* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1964), pp. 395-449.»

<sup>8</sup> *Voyages*, I, 269.

<sup>9</sup> For the link between the lack of water and the absence of snow-clad mountains, see letter from A. D. Kalmykov.



## CHAPTER VI

### Qūmis and Gurgān

ONE part of the principal road between the present-day settlements of 'Abbāsābād [on the east] and Lāsgird [on the west] was included by the Arab geographers in the region of Qūmis, which appears, as Κωμισσηνή, as early as the work of Isidore of Charax. In the tenth century, Qūmis came within the framework of the possessions of the Buwayhids who, however, paid part of the revenues from this region, as well as from the neighboring Ray—200,000 dinars in all—to the Sāmānids. Clearly, this political boundary was purely artificial and therefore underwent frequent modifications. At the time of the Arab conquest, the eastern portion of Qūmis was part of Khurāsān; Ya'qūbī still refers to Dāmghān as the first town in Khurāsān.<sup>1</sup>

In the eastern part of Qūmis, between 'Abbāsābād and Shāhrūd, there seems never to have been any important settlements. Here the last spurs of the Khurāsān mountains descend into the plain; the road passes by the foothills and occasionally through them. These gradually diminishing ridges offered a suitable corridor for Türkmen raids, which ceased only with the conquest of Etek by the Russians. Until that time, it was considered unsafe to cross this stretch without an armed escort; twice a month small military detachments would depart, one eastward from Shāhrūd, one westward from Māzinān; the two would meet in the village of Miyāndasht and exchange their roles; there is in Miyāndasht an old caravanserai built by Shāh 'Abbās the Great and a new one constructed in a fortresslike fashion from fired brick.

There is a fertile stretch along the river Shāhrūd, which flows from the snowy mountains of Shāh Kūh, a branch of the Alburz chain that separates the Caspian coastland from the Iranian pla-

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, p. 276. «For the history and monuments of Dāmghān, see now Iqbāl Yaghmā'i, *Jughrāfiyā-yi ta'rikhi-yi Dāmghān* (Tehran, 1336/1957); D. N. Wilber, *EP*, art. "Dāmghān."») [For the province of Qūmis, see Bosworth, *EP*, art. "Qūmis," and for the region in general (now in the modern administrative district [*farmāndāri-yi kull*] of Simnān) and the town of Dāmghān, see Chahryār Adle, "Contribution à la géographie historique du Damghan," *Le monde iranien et l'Islam*, I (1971), 69-104.]

teau, and that reaches here a height of 13,000 feet. The town of Shāhrūd itself was never of any great significance in the past, and is not mentioned by the tenth-century geographers, who place the post station at Badhash;<sup>2</sup> a settlement by the name of Badasht, three and a half English miles to the east of Shāhrūd, is mentioned by Fraser.<sup>3</sup> The town of Bisṭām, situated somewhat above Shāhrūd in the same fertile river valley, has had greater historical importance. It is believed to have been founded in the sixth century by Bisṭām, governor of Khurāsān, Qūmis, Gurgān, and Ṭabaristān, who in the time of troubles tried to seize the throne.<sup>4</sup> In the ninth century, one of the first Ṣūfī shaykhs, Bāyazīd (more correctly Abū Yazīd Bisṭāmī) lived here;<sup>5</sup> at the time of the Arab geographers, Bisṭām was a modest but prosperous town.<sup>6</sup> Its celebrity is assured to this day by the tomb of the shaykh Abū Yazīd, whom the inhabitants of Bisṭām drove out of their town twelve times; it is related that each time the shaykh would make the following remark: "Blessed is the town in which lives the heretic Bāyazīd!" Ṣanī' al-Dawla bitterly remarks that "now they all are worshipers of the shaykh's tomb; although communication with his noble person had been beyond their faculties [in his lifetime], the most intimate kinship unites them with his grave which consists of stone and clay" ("... *wa aknūn hama mu'taqid-i qabr u turbat-i ū-yand wa īn az ān-ast ki īshān-rā bā shakḥ-i sharīf-i ū mujālasatī nabūd ammā bā qabr-i ū ki sang u kulūkh-ast munāsabat-i tamām dārand*").<sup>7</sup>

The existing edifice of the shaykh's mausoleum, like other old buildings of Bisṭām, goes back to the fourteenth century. A detailed description of the mausoleum, together with a drawing of it, is in Ṣanī' al-Dawla's book.<sup>8</sup> Inside the building, at a passage from one part to another, is an Arabic inscription indicating the date of the

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Rusta, p. 170; Maqdisī, p. 371.

<sup>3</sup> Khorasan, p. 345.

<sup>4</sup> Marquart, *Ērānshahr*, p. 71. (For Bisṭām and its monuments see also M. Streck, *EP*, art. "Bisṭām"; Herzfeld, "Khorasan. Denkmalsgeographische Studien zur Kulturgeschichte des Islam in Iran," *Isl.*, XI (1921), 168-69; Iqbāl Yaghmā'ī, *Bisṭām wa Bāyazīd-i Bisṭāmī* (Tehran, 1317/1938).)

<sup>5</sup> Biography of Bāyazīd in Farīd al-Dīn 'Attār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (London and Leiden, 1905-1907), I, 194 ff.; cf. Hujwiri, *Kashf al-mahjūb*, tr. Nicholson, pp. 106 ff. (For Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī, see also Nicholson, *EP* Suppl., art. "al-Bisṭāmī"; Bertel's, "Proiskhozhdenie sufizma," pp. 32-34, and his "Nūr-al-'ulūm"; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī, *Shatahāt al-Ṣūfiyya (Abū Yazid Bisṭāmī)* (Cairo, 1944).)

<sup>6</sup> Iṣṭakhrī, p. 211; Maqdisī, p. 356.

<sup>7</sup> *Maṭla' al-shams-i Nāsrī*, I, 78-79. (See also Barthold, *Islam, Soch.* VI, 116.)

<sup>8</sup> *Maṭla' al-shams-i Nāsrī*, I, 69.

construction, 702/1302.<sup>9</sup> The mausoleum is in the southwestern corner of a courtyard that is flanked by a few other buildings; among these is the tomb of one of the 'Alids, Muḥammad b. Ja'far, built in the sixteenth century, and a mosque that is believed to antedate Bāyazīd's mausoleum. This mosque is flanked by a minaret distinctive in that it moves when people stand on its top. Fraser explains this by the fact that the tower is built with very thin bricks and leans slightly sideways: this, in his opinion, does not adversely affect the solidity of its structure.<sup>10</sup> Near the mausoleum is also an edifice in which a dried mummy is kept; Fraser was told that it is the body of the founder of the town, Biṣṭām Mīrzā. A passage leads from this courtyard into a madrasa, in it there is a beautiful arch with an inscription indicating the date of the construction: 713/1313.<sup>11</sup> From among the older monuments of Biṣṭām, the Friday mosque (716/1316-17) is also noteworthy.

Despite its shrines, Biṣṭām eventually had to fall behind Shāhrūd, which is situated on the main route from western to eastern Persia, at a point where this route is joined by almost all the roads from the north. Shāhrūd is separated from Astarābād and the south-eastern shore of the Caspian sea by mountains that are crossed by high but not particularly difficult passes; a road goes from Shāhrūd to the northern part of Khurāsān through Biṣṭām, Jājarm, and the valley of Isfarāyīn, where in the Middle Ages there used to be a town of the same name.<sup>12</sup> This Isfarāyīn was destroyed by Tīmūr in 1381 and once more by the Afghans in 1731, so that today only ruins are left; they are called Shahr-i Bilqīs or Shahr-i Sabā', and have been described by Yate.<sup>13</sup> This road was also joined in Isfarāyīn by another that led from Nīshāpūr to the banks of the Gurgān and the city of Gurgān, capital of ancient Hyrcania; Gurgān was also linked by a road with Biṣṭām. Finally, a road went from Biṣṭām through Jājarm toward the northern border of Khurāsān, and to

<sup>9</sup> The inscription is quoted by Ṣanī' al-Dawla; see also his description of the edifice and its dimensions.

<sup>10</sup> *Khorasan*, p. 337.

<sup>11</sup> The inscription with a date; there is also the name of the shaykh, Muḥammad b. Faḍl Allāh b. Bāyazīd, who built this edifice, and the name of the craftsman, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Jaṣṣāṣ (the word al-Jaṣṣāṣ means "the artisan who prepares gypsum, plaster"). Cf. the opinion of Ṣanī' al-Dawla, *Maṭla' al-shams-i Nāṣirī*, I, 74.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Juwaynī, for Isfarāyīn to the north of Sabzawār.

<sup>13</sup> *Khurasan and Sistan*, pp. 378-80. [For the district (now a *shahristān* of the province of Khurāsān, with its chief town at Miyanābād) and medieval town of Isfarāyīn, see Bosworth, *EP*, s.v.]

the banks of the Atrek and into the Kurdish khanates of Bujnurd, Qūchān and Daragaz; these khanates are still called Kurdistān in Fraser's book.<sup>14</sup> Thus if one can surmise that the migration of the Aryans into Persia proceeded through Etek and the basin of the Gurgān river, it was in the area around Bisṭām and Shāhrūd that this movement would have joined the modern high road. Curzon correctly observes that an army that has seized Astarābād, Bisṭām, and Shāhrūd has *ipso facto* cut Khurāsān off from western Persia.<sup>15</sup>

In antiquity, Hyrcania also encompassed the eastern portion of modern Māzandarān; by the time of the Arab geographers, however, the border between Ṭabaristān, as Māzandarān was then called, and Jurjān or Gurgān passed not far to the west of Astarābād. In terms of climatic conditions, the area between the Alburz, Gurgān, and the Caspian coast differs fundamentally from Khurāsān; here, as in other Caspian regions of Persia, precipitation is very high, so that the region has luscious vegetation.<sup>16</sup> Fraser, who reached the banks of the Gurgān coming from Bujnurd on the east, relates in glowing terms the impression that the change made on him.<sup>17</sup> The earthen walls and flat earthen roofs of Khurāsānī dwellings, whose color fully corresponds to that of the soil, were replaced by constructions that were built chiefly of wooden pales held together with clay, and which had wooden floors; household utensils were also made from wood. On the other hand, the humidity that condenses in the forests makes the climate of this region quite harmful to the health. Furthermore, the country is totally open to inroads by nomads from the north, against whom fortifications were built as early as Sāsānid times.

The Arabs conquered Gurgān much later than Khurāsān (in fact, only in 717 A.D.). Until the conquest of Gurgān, travel through Qūmis was considered unsafe, and even the governors of Khurāsān appointed by the caliph usually preferred to take the southern route through Fārs and Kirmān; only Qutayba b. Muslim, in 705,

<sup>14</sup> *Khorasan*, p. 249.

<sup>15</sup> *Persia*, I, 189.

<sup>16</sup> Between Gurgān and the mountains there is a lovely plain with magnificent forests; the climate is much healthier than in Māzandarān, and the soil is better. Only the area to the south of the river is irrigated; that to the north cannot be irrigated because the river flows in a deep gorge (letter from A. D. Kalmykov). «For the pre-Islamic monuments of Gurgān, see Vanden Berghe, *Archéologie de l'Iran ancien*, pp. 7-14, 142-44; for the history of the region, see Hamza b. Yūsuf al-Sahmī, *Ta'rikh-i Jurjān*, ed. Niẓām al-Dīn, Hyderabad, Dcn., 1950.» [R. Hartmann-Boyle, *EP*, art. "Gurgān."]

<sup>17</sup> Fraser, *Khorasan*, p. 610.



realized the journey through Ray and Qūmis.<sup>18</sup> In the time of the Arab geographers, Gurgān was the capital of the local dynasty of the Ziyārīds, whose founder, Mardāwīj b. Ziyār (928-935) conquered a part of Persia and was beginning to dream of a restoration of the throne of the Sāsānīds when he was killed by his slaves.<sup>19</sup> His successors had to submit to the mightier dynasties of the Būyīds, the Ghaznawīds and ultimately the Saljuqs; in the second half of the eleventh century, the dynasty was annihilated by the notorious sect of the Ismāʿīlīs or Assassins.<sup>2</sup> The city of Gurgān thus no longer had any political importance after Mardāwīj, but it remained, judging from descriptions by the Arab geographers, the largest city of the Caspian regions. Iṣṭakhrī speaks with enthusiasm of the fertility in this country, where the growing of crops of warm as well as cold climates converged, where it snowed in winter but where nonetheless palms could grow.<sup>20</sup> Gurgān, together with Ṭabaristān, was also renowned for its silk.

The city of Gurgān, Jurjān in Arabic, straddled the river of the same name; the river divided it into two parts,<sup>21</sup> Shahrīstān and Bakrābād,<sup>22</sup> which were linked by a bridge. Shahrīstān was on the right bank, Bakrābād on the left.<sup>23</sup> As early as the tenth century, the city went into a decline caused by chronic wars between the Sāmānīds and the Būyīds, a struggle in which the Ziyārīds kept submitting to whichever side was winning. To the epoch of the Ziyārīds also pertains the tomb of Qābūs b. Wushmgīr, built in 397/1006-7;<sup>24</sup> the edifice has been described by Fraser,<sup>25</sup> Yates,<sup>26</sup> and, in greater detail, by I. T. Poslavskii.<sup>27</sup> Still clearly visible today is a

<sup>18</sup> Ṭabarī, II, 1,322.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi 'l-tārīkh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg (Leiden, 1851-1876), VIII, 226. [W. Madelung, "Minor Dynasties of Northern Iran," in *Cambridge History of Iran*, IV, pp. 212-13; H. Busse, "Iran under the Būyīds," *ibid.*, pp. 254-57.]

<sup>2</sup> See Bosworth, "On the Chronology of the Ziyārīds in Gurgān and Ṭabaristān," *Isl.*, XL (1964), 25-34.

<sup>20</sup> Iṣṭakhrī, p. 213.

<sup>21</sup> In Ibn Ḥawqal, p. 213, the eastern and western sides. The city of Gurgān did not yet exist at the time of the Arab conquest: Ṭabarī, II, 1,324, line 13. Cf. the cities of antiquity and the Middle Ages in Forbiger, *Handbuch*, II, 571.

<sup>22</sup> Maḥalla-yi Bakrābād in the romance about Abū Muslim Ṭarṭūsī, ms. Asiatic Museum 280ae, fol. 121a, the passage about Shāh Ṭālībā-yi Bakrābādī.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn Ḥawqal, p. 273. According to Maqdisī, p. 358, the *Shahrīstān* had had nine gates. [Abū Dulaf, *Travels in Iran*, p. 58, #57.]

<sup>24</sup> In Sykes, *A History of Persia*, II, 93, erroneously 375 = 997.

<sup>25</sup> *Khorasan*, pp. 612-14.

<sup>26</sup> *Khurasan and Sistan*, pp. 240-48.

<sup>27</sup> «Poslavskii, "Iz poezdki," pp. 184-90, see also Barthold, "Bashnia Kabusa"; A. Godard, "Gurgān and the Gunbād-i Qābūs," *Survey of Persian Art*, II, 967-74,

Kūfic inscription that is quoted by Sam'ānī, who visited this monument in the twelfth century.<sup>28</sup> The harbor of Abaskūn served as the port of Gurgān; it was probably situated at the estuary of the Gurgān river on the site of the present-day settlement of Gümüş-tepe.<sup>b</sup> Alongside Abaskūn, Astarābād is also mentioned, not as the trading center that it is today, but as a manufacturing town; the inhabitants were renowned for their mastery in silk weaving. Today only woolen rugs were woven in Astarābād,<sup>29</sup> but more widely known are other kinds of industry that did not exist there in the Middle Ages, in particular, soap boiling and the manufacture of gunpowder.

To the north of Abaskūn, on the eastern shore of the Caspian sea, there was only one inhabited place, Dihistān, six days' journey from Abaskūn. Here was the border between Muslim domains and those of the nomads, the Ghuzz Turks. For this reason there was a *ribāṭ* here; in this case the term was used in its original sense of a military post at a frontier. The foundation of Dihistān was attributed to the Parthians; European scholars usually connect the word Dihistān with the name of the Δάαι or Dahae, a nation that, according to the classical geographers, lived to the east of the Caspian sea. According to Ṭabarī, there was at a distance of five far-sakhs from Dihistān an island,<sup>30</sup> or, more exactly, a peninsula (as in the work of the anonymous tenth-century Persian geographer)<sup>31</sup> on which a certain Turkish prince lived. Iṣṭakhri<sup>32</sup> and Ibn Ḥawqal<sup>33</sup> knew Dihistān only as a minor settlement on the seacoast<sup>34</sup> inhab-

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and the bibliographies to these works.)) [A.D.H. Bivar, *EP*<sup>2</sup>, art. "Gunbadh-i Kābūs."]

<sup>28</sup> Barthold, *Turkestan*, pt. 1, p. 63. Kufic script; see B. Moritz, *EI*<sup>1</sup>, art. "Arabia. d. Arabic Writing": in Persia there are no monuments with this script. The inscription of the Chifteh minaret in Erzurum is apocryphal (351/962-3), and the earliest monuments in Kūfic are the tomb of Yūsuf b. Quṣayyir (557/1162) and the mausoleum of Mu'min Khātūn (582/1106-7) in Nakhchevān. (Cf. also Barthold, "Bashnia Kabusa," *Soch.* IV, 263 and n. 12.)

<sup>b</sup> For Abaskūn, see Minorsky, *EP*<sup>2</sup>, s.v.

<sup>29</sup> Rugs are no longer made in Astarābād; in mountain villages woolen kilims are made from a thick but smooth fabric. In the city itself there are two ancient citadels, with a dirt-filled underground passage between them. (For Astarābād, see also Streck, *EI*<sup>1</sup>, s.v.; H. L. Rabino, *Mázandarān and Astarābād*; R. N. Frye, *EP*<sup>2</sup>, s.v.; and bibliographies there.)

<sup>30</sup> Ṭabarī, II, 1323.

<sup>31</sup> *Hudūd al-'ālam*, fol. 5b [tr. Minorsky, p. 60].

<sup>32</sup> Iṣṭakhri, p. 219.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn Ḥawqal, p. 277.

<sup>34</sup> This is an error, arising from a confusion of the *ribāṭ* of Dihistān with the place called Dihistānān-Sūr (this error also in Le Strange, *The Lands*, p. 379). See also

ited by fishermen; on the other hand, in Maqdisī's description, tenth-century Dihistān was a district consisting of a whole series of settlements, twenty-four in number.<sup>35</sup> The center of this district or *rustāq* was the town of Ākhur, situated on the right-hand side of a road that went toward the *ribāt* at the frontier; the minaret of Ākhur was visible from far away. The *ribāt* used to be surrounded by a wall, but even by Maqdisī's time it had been demolished on the order of the government, and the former frontier outpost became a peaceful, flourishing settlement. Many bazaars and mosques were to be found there; from among the latter, Maqdisī singles out the old mosque with wooden columns and another with a minaret; this mosque was, in contrast to the rest, not of the Ḥanafī but of the Shāfi'ī school. Until the question of how much the eastern shoreline of the Caspian sea has changed in the course of the last millennium is answered, we shall not be able to pinpoint the whereabouts of this frontier outpost of Muslim territory. Historical sources about this area are exceedingly scant; we do not know when Dihistān ceased to exist and when the last vestiges of Persian culture and urban civilization disappeared from here. There are traces along the Atrek<sup>36</sup> of an extensive irrigation system, but contemporary explorers such as Poslavskii admit the possibility of artificial irrigation here only under the condition that some time in the past there used to be in the Atrek, Sumbar, and Chandyr rivers incomparably more water than today, and that the water did not have the bitter-salty taste it has now.<sup>37</sup> A change in the course of the Atrek is also assumed on the basis of the site of a city whose ruins are known by the name of Mashhad-i Mišrīyān, that is, "place of the martyrdom of the Egyptians" (on maps it often appears as Mastorian).<sup>38</sup> These ruins were described at the beginning of the 1830s by the traveler A. Conolly,<sup>39</sup> and in greater detail, together

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Barthold, *Oroshenie*, p. 33, *Soch.* III, 122. In the romance about Abū Muslim Ṭarṭūsī, ms. Asiatic Museum 280 ac, fol. 229a, the names are Dihistan and Bāz.r.

<sup>35</sup> Maqdisī, pp. 358-59. «Cf. Barthold, *Oroshenie*, *Soch.* III, 122.» [For Dihistān, see *Hudūd al-'ālam*, tr. p. 133, comm. pp. 385-86; B. Spuler, *EP*<sup>2</sup>, s.v.]

<sup>36</sup> Atrek, cf. Maḥmūd Kāshgharī, *Dīwān lughāt al-Turk*, ed. Kilisli Mu'allim Rif'at (Istanbul, 1333-5/1915-7), I, 93: a Ghuzz word that means *al-ashqar min al-rijāl* (of men, "ruddy, handsome, blond, or red-haired").

<sup>37</sup> «Artificial irrigation seems to have appeared in Dihistān as early as the middle of the second millennium B.C., but around the middle of the first millennium B.C. it fell into decay; see V. Masson, "Arkheologicheskie raboty," p. 67 (map); *idem*, *Margiana*, p. 97.))

<sup>38</sup> Mashhad-i Mišrīyān in Muḥammad Mahdī Khān Astarābādī, *Ta'rīkh-i Nādīrī*, p. 67, concerning the events of 1732. [Minorsky, *EP*<sup>1</sup>, art. "Meshhed-i Mišrīyān."]

<sup>39</sup> *Journey to the North of India, Overland from England, through Russia, Persia and Afghanistan* (London, 1838), pp. 76-77.

with a plan, by A. M. Konshin.<sup>40</sup> The city occupied an area of 120 desiatinas [that is, 324 acres], and was surrounded by a pentagonal wall built from fired brick, with bastions on its southern side. In the center were two tall minarets pertaining to a stuccoed mosque, which is well preserved; at the city's two extremities were visible traces of tall, arched gates with blue tiles of the kind that occur today in Persian royal palaces. By the eastern gate stood another large white mosque, which is also well preserved. Local tradition attributes the destruction of the city to the Kalmucks, who appeared in these parts at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century. A canal from the Atrek, fifty versts long, was led to the city. These ruins are so far from the present-day coast that it is hard to guess whether they are in any way related to Dihistān of the tenth century, which consisted, as we have seen, of a group of settlements, of which at least the principal one lay immediately on the coast.<sup>41</sup> The extant ruins of the city pertain, as can be seen from their description, to a relatively recent date.<sup>42</sup> Historical sources do not discuss, as far as we know, the question of when the city of Dihistān ceased to exist or whether it was destroyed by the Kalmucks.<sup>43</sup>

In the tenth century, there were no large towns in Qūmis, although the cotton and fur textiles manufactured there enjoyed wide distribution. The largest city of the region was Dāmghān, but even it is referred to by Maqdisī as a minor town.<sup>44</sup> Between Dāmghān and another town, Simnān, there were in the Middle Ages, just as today, two roads: Ibn Rusta describes the direct route through Akhuwān as the post road (it is still in active use today);<sup>45</sup> Iṣṭakhri as well as the other tenth-century geographers describe a circuitous route through the settlement of Frat.<sup>46</sup> There are medieval minarets in Dāmghān and Simnān (two in Dāmghān<sup>47</sup> and one in

<sup>40</sup> Konshin, *Raz'iasneme*, pp. 152-53. (For the ruins of Mashhad-i Miṣrīyān, see also Barthold, *Oroshenie*, *Soch.* III, 122 ff.)

<sup>41</sup> (Cf. *ibid.*, p. 127 n. 34.)

<sup>42</sup> There is a mosque with an inscription of the Khwārazmshāh Muḥammad (1200-1220), see Semenov, "Nadpisi na portale."

<sup>43</sup> (Cf. Barthold, *Oroshenie*, *Soch.* III, 124-26.)

<sup>44</sup> Maqdisī, p. 355. [Abū Dulaf, *Travels in Iran*, tr. p. 57. #55; Lockhart, *Persian Cities*, pp. 87-93. In about 1950 Dāmghān's population was approximately 10,000 (*Farhang*, III, 116).]

<sup>45</sup> Ibn Rusta, pp. 169-70.

<sup>46</sup> Iṣṭakhri, pp. 215-16. [For Simnān, see Abū Dulaf, *Travels in Iran*, tr. pp. 56-57, #54, comm. p. 104.]

<sup>47</sup> Pictures of both in the *Safar-nāma . . . ba-Khurāsān*, pp. 203-204, one near the Masjīd-i Chihil Sutūn (construction of Mu'āwīn?), the other near the Masjīd-i Jāmi';

Simnān<sup>48</sup>), which architecturally resemble the minaret of Khus-rūjird. The area is also noteworthy because the capital of Parthia, which is known to us only under its Greek name Ἑκατόμυλος, Hekatompylos, that is, "The City of a Hundred Gates," used to be here. The exact location of this city remains a matter of debate; Tomaschek follows the opinion of one of his predecessors, Schindler, according to whom Hekatompylos lay in the center of a triangle formed by Dāmghān and the settlements of Frat and Gūsha.<sup>49</sup>

see also in Jackson, *From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam*, pp. 147, 167 ff., 172. [The minarets mentioned here are presumably those of the Tārī(k)-Khāna mosque (basically eighth-century, minaret from the eleventh century). See A. Godard, "Les anciennes mosquées de l'Iran," *AI*, I (1936), 187 ff.; Sylvia Matheson, *Persia; an Archaeological Guide* (London, 1972), pp. 193-94.]

<sup>48</sup> The Masjid-i Shāh in Simnān is a construction of Fath 'Alī Shāh (*Safar-nāma* . . . *ba-Khurāsān*, p. 213); the *ark u 'imārat* were built in the same reign by the shāh's son Ḥajjī Bahā' al-Dawla, *ibid.*, p. 212); description of the bazaar (p. 213) and of the surroundings (p. 210). For Qūmis, see *ibid.*, p. 207. On the road from Dāmghān to Mīrābād (three farsakhs), approximately halfway, one sees (through the *dūrbīn* [telescope]) the fortress of Girdkūh, see *ibid.*, pp. 204, 206-207. The fortress is also visible from the road from Mīrābād to Gūsh. In 658/1260 Girdkūh was not yet taken (see Juzjānī, tr. Raverty, II, 1,208-11). For Girdkūh, see also Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Quatremère, pp. 212, 278 (according to Quatremère, p. 212, twenty years after 1256, this fortress was still in the hands of the Ismā'īlīs). Cf. also Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, II, 539 (Yāqūt on the way to Khurāsān in 613/1216-7: "He who stands in Dāmghān sees it in the middle of the mountains"). One day's journey from Dāmghān to Girdkūh. According to Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, it is three farsakhs, cf. Le Strange, *The Lands*, p. 365. For the road from Simnān to Dāmghān, see Jackson, *From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam*, p. 153. The caravanseraī of Shāh 'Abbās the Great and the stone *ribāt* of Anūshīrwān (pp. 156 ff.), a square of 45 yards' length on each side. (See also Kramers, *EI*<sup>1</sup>, art. "Semnān.") [The medieval minaret mentioned here is presumably that of the Masjid-i Jāmi' (eleventh century). See Matheson, *Persia*, pp. 190-91; Ch. Adle, "Le minaret du Masjed-e Jāme' de Semnān," *Studia iranica*, IV (1975), 177-86.]

<sup>49</sup> Tomaschek, *Zur historischen Topographie*, I, 223. (The best synopsis of the classical sources regarding this city is still the article by A. D. Mordtmann, "Hekatompylos. Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Geographie Persiens," *SB Bayr. AW*, I (1869), 497-536.) [The site of Hekatompylos has been identified with virtual certainty by J. Hansman as lying at the modern spot called Shahr-i Qūmis to the southwest of Dāmghān near Gūsha/Qūsha on the Simnān road. See his "The Problem of Qūmis," *JRAS* (1968), pp. 111-39; *idem* and D. Stronach, "Excavations at Shahr-i Qūmis, 1967," *JRAS* (1970), pp. 29-62; *idem*, "Excavations at Shahr-i Qūmis, Iran," *National Geographical Society Research Reports, 1970 Projects* (Washington, D.C., 1979); Matheson, *Persia*, pp. 191-92; Georgina Herrmann, *The Iranian Revival* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 36-38. A full account of the extensive work undertaken by the British Institute of Persian Studies at Shahr-i Qūmis has not yet appeared.]

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